

00131

1961/04/18

Telegram From the Embassy in the Soviet Union to the Department of State

Moscow, April 18, 1961, 2 p.m.

2550.

~~No to intervention~~

FOLLOWING LETTER TO PRESIDENT KENNEDY FROM KHRUSHCHEV HANDED
ME BY ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER SEVENOV AT 12:15 TODAY. BEGIN
TEXT:

- (I) MR. PRESIDENT, I SEND YOU THIS MESSAGE IN AN HOUR OF ALARM,
BRAUGHT WITH DANGER FOR THE PEACE OF THE WHOLE WORLD. ARMED
AGGRESSION HAS BEGUN AGAINST CUBA. IT IS A SECRET TO NO ONE
THAT THE ARMED BANDS INVADING THIS COUNTRY WERE TRAINED,
EQUIPPED AND ARMED, IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. THE
PLANES WHICH ARE BOMBING CUBAN CITIES BELONG TO THE UNITED
STATES OF AMERICA, THE BOMBS THEY ARE DROPPING ARE BEING
SUPPLIED BY THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT.
- (II) ALL OF THIS EVOKES HERE IN THE SOVIET UNION AN UNDERSTANDABLE
FEELING OF INDIGNATION ON THE PART OF THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT
AND THE SOVIET PEOPLE.
- (III) ONLY RECENTLY, IN EXCHANGING OPINIONS THROUGH OUR RESPECTIVE
REPRESENTATIVES, WE TALKED WITH YOU ABOUT THE MUTUAL DESIRE
OF BOTH SIDES TO PUT FORWARD JOINT EFFORTS DIRECTED TOWARD
IMPROVING RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR COUNTRIES AND ELIMINATING THE
DANGER OF WAR. YOUR STATEMENT A FEW DAYS AGO THAT THE USA
WOULD NOT PARTICIPATE IN MILITARY ACTIVITIES AGAINST CUBA
CREATED THE IMPRESSION THAT THE TOP LEADERS OF THE UNITED STATES
WERE TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE CONSEQUENCES FOR GENERAL PEACE AND
FOR THE USA ITSELF WHICH AGGRESSION AGAINST CUBA COULD HAVE.

(43) Source: Department of State, ^{Presidential Correspondence} ~~876-Files~~ Lot 77 D 163, Pen
Pal Series, 1961-1964, Special US-USSR File, 1961. Secret; Riact;
Limit Distribution. ^{Received in the Department on April 18 at 8:53 a.m.} The Embassy also reported that a demonstration
against U.S. involvement in Cuba began outside the Embassy at 2:35
p.m. local time. ^{Telegram 2552 from Moscow, April 18;} ~~(Ibid., Central Files, 737.00/4-1861)~~ The Soviet
Government released the text of the letter to the press at the same
time that it was presented to the Embassy in Moscow. ^{It} ~~The text of~~
~~the letter~~ is also printed in Department of State ¹⁺ Bulletin, ⁴³ May 8,

1961, p. 662. ^{Amintadur Zwin read the text of Khrushchev's letter during debate}
in the First Committee on April 8. (U.N. doc. A/C.1/SR.1153)
See footnote 3, Document ¹⁺ ~~1~~. ⁴³ Schlesinger memo, 4/14/

~~SECRET~~
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HOW CAN WHAT IS BEING DONE BY THE UNITED STATES IN REALITY BE UNDERSTOOD, WHEN AN ATTACK ON CUBA HAS NOW BECOME A FACT?

- ⑪ IT IS STILL NOT LATE TO AVOID THE IRREPARABLE. THE GOVERNMENT OF THE USA STILL HAS THE POSSIBILITY OF NOT ALLOWING THE FLAME OF WAR IGNITED BY INTERVENTIONS IN CUBA TO GROW INTO AN INCOMPARABLE CONFLAGRATION. I APPROACH YOU, MR. PRESIDENT, WITH AN URGENT CALL TO PUT AN END TO AGGRESSION AGAINST THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA. MILITARY ARMAMENT AND THE WORLD POLITICAL SITUATION ARE SUCH AT THIS TIME THAT ANY SO-CALLED "LITTLE WAR" CAN TOUCH OFF A CHAIN REACTION IN ALL PARTS OF THE GLOBE.

- 238 ⑫ AS FAR AS THE SOVIET UNION IS CONCERNED, THERE SHOULD BE NO MISTAKE ABOUT OUR POSITION: WE WILL RENDER THE CUBAN PEOPLE AND THEIR GOVERNMENT ALL NECESSARY HELP TO REPEL ARMED ATTACK ON CUBA. WE ARE SINCERELY INTERESTED IN A RELAXATION OF INTERNATIONAL TENSION, BUT IF OTHERS PROCEED TOWARD SHARPENING, WE WILL ANSWER THEM IN FULL MEASURE. AND IN GENERAL IT IS HARDLY POSSIBLE SO TO CONJECT MATTERS THAT THE SITUATION IS SETTLED IN ONE AREA AND CONFLAGRATION EXTINGUISHED, WHILE A NEW CONFLAGRATION IS IGNITED IN ANOTHER AREA.

- ⑬ I HOPE THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF THE USA WILL CONSIDER OUR VIEWS DICTATED BY THE SOLE CONCERN NOT TO ALLOW STEPS WHICH COULD LEAD THE WORLD TO MILITARY CATASTROPHY. END TEXT.

⑭ FREERS (64) 94

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